

## Martial 2541

### Chapter 2541, Great Waves Wash Away The Sand

The newcomer erupted with rage, "Must you insist on being a defender of justice little girl? Have you stopped to consider whether it's worth it? You don't know this person, do you? Do you intend to offend others for the sake of a stranger?"

Zhang Ruo Xi snorted, "I don't know whether it's worth it or not, but I can't just sit still and watch it happen!"

"How unreasonable!" The anger of the newcomer was like an active volcano, and it almost swallowed him up. [How unlucky! I just had to encounter a meddlesome little girl like her when my life is at stake!]

On a regular day, he wouldn't mind wasting a few words with her, but right now, he didn't have the luxury!

Just then, Yang Kai raised his head and looked at the newcomer and said faintly, "The wind is getting stronger outside. I'm afraid you won't be able to find another place if you don't go now, friend."

The newcomer stared back with deep, hatred-filled eyes before turning around and dashing out.

He didn't even bother to spit out a threat, because he knew that if he stayed to argue with Zhang Ruo Xi, he would miss the opportunity to find another cave. Being exposed to the Astral Wind was lethal, but if he left now, he would still have a chance to survive.

It was a gamble.

"Many thanks! This humble one will never forget what you did for me today and will definitely return my gratitude in the future!" The young man hiding in the deepest part of the cave cupped his fists and bowed over and over again to Zhang Ruo Xi.

If Zhang Ruo Xi didn't stand up for him just now, there was no doubt that he would've been thrown out of the cave and left to die. Therefore, he was very grateful to her.

She dismissed it with a smile and a wave of her hand, "Don't mention it."

Her smile seemed to light up the whole cave, and the young man couldn't help staring at her, stunned, while her face turned a little red when she noticed. At the same time, she felt slightly annoyed.

Old Ban lightly coughed, "This old man admires your kind heart, Young Lady, but... I'm afraid what you've done just now is pointless."

"What?" Zhang Ruo Xi turned her head and looked at Old Ban with a puzzled expression on her face.

The old man sighed, "As the time of the Astral Wind draws closer, more and more cultivators will come and fight for a spot. You've managed to drive one of them away, but will you be able to drive away all of them?"

As soon as his words fell, the sound of heavy breathing came from outside the cave.

Following it, several cultivators who were escaping from the strange fog rushed directly towards the cave. They were undoubtedly looking for shelter.

When they reached the entrance, they looked inside, and when they saw that there was no space left, their faces turned dark. However, they seemed to have expected this situation, because instead of stopping to talk nonsense, they summoned their respective artifacts and unleashed their strongest attacks.

Amidst the chaotic flashes of Source Qi, two distressed cries rang out.

Blood splashed, and the two cultivators standing closest to the entrance fell before they could even react. The pungent smell immediately filled the air.

Afterwards, the newcomers laughed and kicked the bodies aside.

"Give us some room if you don't want to die!" They sneered.

As they spoke, their attacks rained down harder, causing the cultivators near the entrance to cry out miserably and incessantly.

Zhang Ruo Xi was stunned upon realizing the truth behind the skeletons outside.

It turned out that those people weren't killed by the Astral Wind, but by other cultivators. Every time the Astral Wind blew, they would fight to the death for shelter, causing countless cultivators to fall over the years. It wouldn't be inaccurate to call this place a graveyard.

It was the case for this cave, and most likely for every other cave in the passageway too.

Rather than simple competitions, the cultivators treated the battles as deadly life-and-death duels, because they all knew that if they failed to obtain shelter, they would die in the Astral Wind. Therefore, their attacks were completely without mercy.

The scene at the entrance of the cave was one of a murky sky over dark earth, with flying sand and rolling pebbles.

Streams of people came and went, attacking fiercely without saying a word.

The situation was extremely chaotic. From time to time, the screams of the fallen would resonate through the cave. The ground was dyed red by blood and dead bodies with severed limbs piled up at the entrance, leaving a strong, nauseating smell of blood.

Only the extremely powerful Masters were able to survive the madness. Those who lacked strength also lacked the qualifications to survive.

The Masters broke into the cave and forced their way inside. They wanted to squeeze into the depths of the cave, because only then would they truly be able to relax. If they stayed near the entrance, they would have to face more latecomers.

Before long, the entire cave fell into complete chaos.

Soon, it spread to the inside of the cave, with different artifacts and Secret Techniques flying loose, everyone seeming to be an enemy.

Yang Kai and his group were deep within the cave, but even so, they couldn't avoid the fighting. However, after Yang Kai killed two Third-Order Dao Source Realm Masters who tried to attack Zhang Ruo Xi and Old Ban with a wave of his hand, people instinctively began to avoid their spot. Only then were they able to relax.

From time to time, the cultivators from the cave would be thrown out by the more powerful newcomers. Soon, out of the ten people who were inside originally, less than half remained.

The wind roared and grew stronger.

All of a sudden, the cultivators who failed to get inside the cave cried out. Extremely frightened expressions appeared on their faces, and they immediately rushed towards the cave without a care for their lives. However, once again, they were blocked.

Then, in front of everyone's eyes, countless slashes appeared on their physiques that were exposed to the outside, as though made by invisible knives. Their skin was peeled away, revealing their muscles and bones.

The screams were truly terrifying, and the scene gave the onlookers goosebumps and caused cold sweat to begin dripping down their backs.

All of the cultivators hiding in the cave stepped back involuntarily

In less than ten breaths of time, the cultivators outside were turned into skeletons, with no flesh or even clothing left on their bodies, their ghastly bones scattered all over the ground, clattering and clanking.

It wasn't until several moments later that Old Ban let out a sigh of relief and said, "Now, we're safe."

The power of the Astral Wind had been fully revealed, so at this point, the cultivators who failed to find shelter had also lost their chance at survival. The Astral Wind would kill anyone caught outside, so no one would intrude within the cave. In other words, the many cultivators inside the cave no longer had to worry about having their spot taken.

It was strange to think that just a few moments ago, they were almost all enemies fighting each other to the death, as though their opponent had killed their family and stolen their wife.

But now, they were all relieved and immediately restrained their hostility. After exchanging a glance, everyone just sat down cross-legged and began to adjust their breathing.

It was as if nothing had happened.

Just now, the battle was to seize shelter, so naturally they had to fight each other to the death, but now that the crisis was over, there was no longer a need to fight. Everyone understood this.

Zhang Ruo Xi looked around, and when she failed to find the young man she had saved before, she couldn't help but sigh. There was no doubt that he had been killed or thrown out at some point during the scuffle just now.

When Old Ban told her that what she had done was pointless, he was telling the truth.

She could save the young man once, but not keep him safe forever. One's own strength was the only real capital one had to survive.

At present, there were more than a dozen people in this cave, and with the exception of Old Ban, the rest were all either Second or Third-Order Dao Realm. They were all latecomers with powerful auras.

The battle had exhausted a lot of them and they were all trying to recover now, so the cave turned silent, save for the nerve-wracking sound of the howling wind outside.

There was no sign of the Astral Wind dying down; rather, it only grew louder and stronger.

Two hours later, Yang Kai, who was meditating, suddenly frowned and looked toward the entrance of the cave.

He felt a faint and inexplicable sense of uneasiness.

At this moment, the cave was surrounded by strange fog and the howling of the Astral Wind though, so even with his powerful Divine Sense, he couldn't tell what was going on outside.

As Yang Kai paid close attention to any movement outside the cave though, a cry and a howl travelled inside from the depths of the strange fog. Although it was distorted by the wind, everyone was able to hear it clearly.

Several pairs of eyes opened at once, turning in scepticism towards the entrance.

"Am I the only one who heard that...?" A cultivator near the entrance asked, frowning.

"A Yin Soul!" Another other replied in a deep voice.

"Hmph, the Ancient Lands Passageway is filled with those, what's so strange about that? Who knows how many people have died here? It's the perfect breeding ground for Yin Souls."

"Naturally, I understand that, but... Don't you feel that the Yin Souls are heading in our direction?"  
Asked the cultivator who had spoken first.

"Haha, how funny. When the Astral Wind comes, we're not the only ones who need to find shelter, the Yin Souls must also lie dormant in a secret place. Why would they come here?"

"That's right. This King has been here for several years, and never once have I met a Yin Soul during the Astral Wind storm. You must be thinking too much, my friend."

"Indeed!" The first man thought about it and agreed that what they said made sense, so he dismissed his concerns.

## Chapter 2542, No Way to Advance or Retreat

The cultivators' conversation naturally entered Yang Kai's ears; however, instead of feeling reassured, he became more vigilant and asked quietly, "Is it true that Yin Souls don't come out when the wind blows, Old Ban?"

"Generally, yes. It's because the Astral Wind is so powerful that not even the Yin Souls here can resist it and are likely to be blown away," Old Ban paused and continued, "However..."

"However?"

"It's not absolutely true all the time. The Yin Souls do not come out not because they can't, but because they choose not to. This old man has only seen them come out once during such a time, so it's very rare. Little Brother, you can rest..."

All of a sudden, Old Ban stopped talking and stared at the entrance of the cave with a look of utter horror. There, he saw ten semi-transparent figures bursting out from the strange fog.

The figures were humanoid but somewhat distorted, making it hard for one to discern their true form.

However, no matter what they were, the cold and violent auras around their bodies were unmistakable.

As soon as they left the strange fog, one by one, their blurry facial features became ferocious and terrifying, as though they were looking for someone to bite.

"Damn it, they're here! Whose big mouth was it that jinxed us?!"

"Be careful, everyone!"

At the entrance of the cave, several cultivators shouted and sprung to their feet, preparing to fight. As soon as these Yin Souls rushed in, they would be the ones to bear the brunt of the attack with no way to advance or retreat. Thus, they could only choose to fight.

In an instant, flashes of light from summoned artifacts appeared one after another and rushed toward the Yin Souls.

Naturally, none of the cultivators who attacked were weak. If they were, they wouldn't have gotten a spot in the cave; however, when their attacks fell, the Yin Souls were hardly affected, their bodies faltered for a moment, but none of them died.

"Damn it... they're all at the Ghost General level!" Someone exclaimed, their face paling.

Yin Souls also had a hierarchy, from Ordinary Ghost to Ghost Generals, Lords, and finally, Kings. Naturally, each one was stronger than the last.

Ordinary Ghosts were so weak that even Old Ban could deal with them easily, but if a Ghost General or Ghost Lord appeared, Old Ban would be completely helpless. As for the Ghost King they had

encountered previously, it was essentially the overlord of the Ancient Lands Passageway and not even an Emperor Realm Master would dare to look down on it.

Previously, Old Ban and Zhang Ruo Xi couldn't resist it at all. If it weren't for Yang Kai's protection, they would've died right there and then.

Therefore, when the cultivators inside the cave heard that the Yin Souls were at the Ghost General level, their faces changed greatly and every single one of them could feel the danger they were in.

None of the attacks that landed on the Ghost Generals caused fatal damage. They merely paused before charging forward even more ferociously.

However, the cultivators at the entrance were clearly veterans who knew how to deal with these Yin Souls. They all stood there calmly, prepared and with heavy expressions on their faces, before suddenly releasing Soul Attacks one by one.

The invisible attacks landed fiercely on the Ghost Generals' bodies.

The majority of the Ghost Generals wailed and were wiped out in an instant, while the surviving ones flickered dimly. They were obviously injured, but since they couldn't feel the pain, they still lunged forth while baring their teeth and brandishing their claws.

There was another outbreak of Spiritual Energy, and the rest of the Ghost Generals suffered the same fate as their former companions.

Seeing this, several cultivators at the entrance of the cave breathed out a sigh of relief. Although they were not afraid of these Ghost Generals because of their cultivation, they were now avoiding the Astral Wind and naturally didn't wish for any more unexpected developments. Fortunately, there were not many of these Ghost Generals, so they could still be easily eliminated.

"There are more!" Yang Kai suddenly turned solemn and warned.

"What?" The faces of those people at the entrance of the cave changed, but before they could ask anything more, they saw first-hand what Yang Kai meant.

From the strange fog, another group of Ghost Generals rushed out, each one having the same ferocious aura as the last group.

\*Xiu xiu xiu...\*

More and more Yin Souls poured in, but this time, their auras were mixed. Some were Ordinary Ghosts while others were Ghost Generals, and there were even a few Ghost Lords in their midst!

In the blink of an eye, the entire cave was surrounded by Yin Souls. There were so many of them that the cultivators felt as though they had fallen into the Netherworld.

\*Gudong!\*

Someone gulped as everyone was looking at the entrance of the cave with a dark and uneasy expression.

"How... How can this be?"

“Why are so many Yin Souls coming out when there is still the Astral Wind?”

“What the hell is going on here?!”

“Just shut up and start killing if you don’t want to die!”

The cultivators who had just settled down cried out in alarm again. They couldn’t believe what they saw and in that moment of hesitation, the Yin Souls launched a new wave of attacks.

The few people at the entrance of the cave had no choice but to push their Spiritual Energy and Source Qi madly to help them kill off the invading Yin Souls.

Shrill screams rang out one after another, and one by one, the Yin Souls disappeared; however, their numbers seemed to be endless. The cultivators at the entrance fought for quite some time, but although their attacks were effective, the number of Yin Souls wasn’t decreasing at all. Rather, it was increasing.

Such a situation made them desperate!

The most effective way to kill a Yin Soul was to wait until they drew close and then use a burst of potent Spiritual Energy to scatter them. However, Spiritual Energy was not inexhaustible. Every time an attack was used, a lot would be consumed, and once one’s Spiritual Energy was exhausted, they would only be able to wait for death.

Moreover, excessive use of Spiritual Energy was likely to damage the foundations of one’s Soul, which was something no cultivator desired.

Within the time it took to brew a cup of tea, the group at the entrance of the cave was already pale and soaked in cold sweat. It was evident that they had exhausted their Spiritual Energy reserves.

“Hey, brothers in the back, could you lend a hand? I can’t hold on for much longer.”

“That’s right, hurry and come help us! If we die, the next wave will be up to you. You can’t hide back there forever!”

“Can someone replace me for a while? I want to take a rest. My Spiritual Energy is almost exhausted. This one would be endlessly grateful.”

.....

Inside the cave.

The remaining nine people in the back watched on with heavy expressions. Although they knew that the cultivators at the entrance were right, who would dare to go up and take their place in this time of crisis? What if they went up and no one dared to take their place once their Knowledge Sea was exhausted? How miserable would their death be then?

It was every man for himself; therefore, although their expressions were grim, none of the people inside the cave said anything, let alone step forward to replace the cultivators at the entrance.

“Old Ban, you don’t think it’s...” Yang Kai suddenly looked at Old Ban and asked quietly.

It only took a moment for Old Ban to understand what Yang Kai meant and he nodded slightly, "It's possible."

Generally, Yin Souls would not appear during the Astral Wind period, so the situation now was quite strange. Moreover, judging from the way the Yin Souls were moving and staring into the cave, it seemed that they bore a grudge against a single person.

This reminded Yang Kai of the Ghost King!

The Ghost King had suffered a loss at Yang Kai's hands, so perhaps this incident was related to that. Since the Ghost King wasn't Yang Kai's opponent, it decided to take advantage of this opportunity to mobilize the Yin Souls in the passageway in order to wear down Yang Kai.

However, despite knowing the truth, he had no way to escape. If the Yin Souls continued attacking, they would reach him sooner or later.

If so, then Yang Kai was the culprit, and everyone else was simply implicated because of him.

Just as Yang Kai and Old Ban were communicating secretly, a man inside the cave suddenly stood up and shouted, "Everyone, at this time of life or death, we have to work together if we want to survive!"

"Exactly! We need to work together! This wonderful Brother has such a profound sense of justice! Hurry and help me fight for a while! This one will thank you with twenty million Source Crystals after this!" A Third-Order Dao Source Realm Master hurriedly responded. He was pale and barely hanging on. He almost couldn't resist pulling the one who spoke over so he could finally rest.

The one who spoke looked at him and said, "Please wait a moment, friend. This one will discuss with the others. It won't be long."

"What? We'll die if you do that!"

"Hmph, we're over here fighting with our lives on the line, while you are in the back relaxing. Do you think we'll just let that happen? If you people don't come and help, then don't blame us for 'accidentally' letting some Yin Souls inside!"

"That's right! If we're going to die, then we'll drag you all down with us!"

"Please be patient and allow this one thirty breaths of time to come up with a satisfactory plan!" The man inside the cave said.

As soon as his words fell, the cultivators at the entrance stopped clamouring. The man's words sounded sincere, and they also wanted to see how he would deal with this.

Moreover, holding on for thirty more breaths of time was not hard to do.

Seeing that they had no objections, the man cupped his fists and said, "He Feng from the Qi Family Fort greets fellow cultivators!"

"Qi Family Fort!" Yang Kai was startled and he turned to look at He Feng, coincidentally meeting his gaze.

Qi He Feng smiled at him, while Yang Kai couldn't help but snort.

[Does he recognize me?]

[If he does, he wouldn't be smiling like that.]

“So, it turns out that you're from Qi Family Fort! I have long admired your family!”

As soon as Qi He Feng reported his background, several people revealed looks of approval; after all, Qi Family Fort was a great force that existed near the Ancient Lands, so it held some prestige here.

Qi He Feng didn't waste any words and went straight to the point, “I believe our current situation is clear to all. If the friends at the entrance were to exhaust their Spiritual Energy and fall, the attacks would fall on us next. It seems that there is no end to this wave of Yin Souls, and if they continue to pour in here, this Qi reckons only a handful of us will be able to survive.”

“Thus, this Qi would like to ask you all to set aside your personal opinions, cooperate sincerely, and fight together. Only then will we have a chance of surviving!”

Chapter 2543, Joining Hands to Defeat the Enemy

“Moreover, there just happens to be twelve of us here. The opening is only wide enough to accommodate about four people standing side by side. This Qi suggests that we divide into three groups, and each one will take turns defending the cave for a stick of incense's worth of time, and then switch out again.”

“This will allow each group to rest for about half an hour, which is enough time to recover almost completely.”

“Try to kill the Yin Souls if possible, and block them if not. As soon as the Astral Wind ends, we won't have to entangle with them any longer. We can escape the cave and thus survive.”

“However, in order for this to happen, we must join hands and trust each other without harboring any other intentions.”

“That is this Qi's proposal. What does everyone think?” Qi He Feng finished, glancing around at the other cultivators.

The four cultivators defending the cave naturally didn't have any objections; after all, they had been fighting for so long and wanted nothing more than to rest. As they shouted their agreement and nodded repeatedly, they almost couldn't resist retreating immediately.

Although it was hard for them to see each other's expressions, every sensible cultivator inside the cave knew that Qi He Feng was right. The only way to survive and escape this crisis was to join hands and fight together.

Thus, after a moment of silence, someone said, “Brother Qi is right. I agree!”

“Agreed!”

“Agreed!”

One by one, the cultivators nodded and agreed. Before long, a general consensus was reached.

Qi He Feng turned to look at Yang Kai, as though he was seeking his agreement. Yang Kai smiled, “Let’s do as you proposed.”

Qi He Feng turned back with a solemn expression, “Since no one has any objections, let’s begin; however, this Qi will be blunt and say right now that no mistakes can be made during this. If anyone dares to hold back or do anything else that could sabotage us, this Qi, as well as everyone else here, will not show any mercy.”

“As it should be!”

Soon, under Qi He Feng’s guidance, the remaining eight people were divided into two groups.

He seemed to have noticed that Yang Kai, Zhang Ruo Xi, and Old Ban were together, so instead of separating the three, he asked a Second-Order Dao Source Realm Master to join them and take the third shift.

After making the groups, Qi He Feng moved toward the entrance with his group.

The original four cultivators at the entrance quickly retreated and moved out of the way.

Qi He Feng and his group were soon engaged with the Yin Souls, and the fight was in full swing. The original four cultivators pulled out pills and sat down to restore their energy.

They only had half an hour, so they had to make the most of their time.

Qi He Feng’s group cooperated well overall. Under the brilliance of their respective Secret Techniques and artifacts, the Yin Souls were constantly beaten back and killed.

As they watched on, the other cultivators were even more convinced that they had made the right decision to follow Qi He Feng’s proposal.

If they managed to survive this trip, Qi He Feng would undoubtedly be known as a great hero. If he hadn’t stood forth and proposed this plan, the twelve people in the cave would’ve likely turned into scattered skeletons.

Qi He Feng’s group fought nonstop for some time, and although the energy consumption was great, they were able to pull through without falling into danger.

Seeing that their turn was approaching, Yang Kai got up slowly and said in a soft voice, “Old Ban, just hide behind me and deal with the ones that slip through.”

Upon hearing this, Old Ban didn’t say much and only nodded.

As a First-Order Dao Source Realm, he was the weakest in the cave. Moreover, he was old, so he wouldn’t even be able to survive if he had to face ten or twenty Ordinary Ghosts, let alone these Ghost Generals.

He knew how strong Yang Kai was as he could deal with even the Ghost King, let alone its subordinates. There was no need to refuse Yang Kai's protection.

Yang Kai's movements seemed leisurely, but it took only an instant for his group to replace Qi He Feng's.

A brilliant light burst from Zhang Ruo Xi's hand as extremely rich and pure Spiritual Energy turned into an invisible blade that swept through the entire scene like a divine weapon, cutting down every Yin Soul before her as though they were nothing but straw.

The Second-Order Source Realm Master who was with them turned to look at her in amazement. Only then did he realize how powerful this beautiful girl was, and for a second, he felt both fear and respect. Then, he felt a stab to his self-esteem and clenched his teeth, releasing his Spiritual Energy and fighting to the best of his abilities so as not to be underestimated.

Yang Kai's performance was not as exaggerated as Zhang Ruo Xi's, but every time he used his Spiritual Energy, he would inconspicuously eliminate a large area of Yin Souls, most of whom were hidden in the strange fog, so no matter how much noise they made, no one noticed.

Occasionally, he would deliberately let one or two Yin Souls pass for Old Ban to deal with.

It wasn't for the sake of Old Ban's self-esteem, but because the other cultivators were working so hard and sincerely that it would seem unreasonable for Old Ban to be doing nothing.

One or two Yin Souls were easy to deal with and didn't pose any threat.

As soon as Yang Kai took over the defence, the situation changed greatly.

Previously, no matter which group was at the entrance, their vision would be filled with endless Yin Souls. More would appear as they were killed, which made them feel desperate.

But this time, with Zhang Ruo Xi killing at the front and Yang Kai cutting off the Yin Souls' reinforcements in the rear, the situation at the entrance became much better in just ten breaths of time.

The number of Yin Souls had obviously reduced, giving one the illusion that the disaster would pass soon.

Seeing this, the eight resting cultivators couldn't help but perk up. It was as though they had seen a glimmer of hope in the fog.

After another stick of incense's worth of time, without Yang Kai's having to call out, the first group stood up and stepped forth to replace them.

By now, no one was thinking about their own benefits. Everyone knew that if they wanted to survive, they would have to cooperate with each other.

However, after the first group took over, they discovered that the overwhelming number of Yin Souls had been restored and were quite depressed.

Like this, the twelve people in the cave worked together in an orderly manner, constantly resisting the invasion of the Yin Souls.

A day passed and everyone's expressions gradually turned sombre. This was because they had discovered that even after an entire day, the Yin Souls showed no intention of retreating, and continued to invade.

Most of the cultivators were injured now, and although no one had suffered fatal injuries, it would become a problem if they weren't treated soon.

Only Yang Kai's group of four, because of his secret protection, was still intact.

The reason for the injuries was due to the excessive and long-term consumption of Spiritual Energy. Although they were given time to rest and consumed numerous pills, the fatigue couldn't be entirely dispelled.

Moreover, there was something even worse; they were running out of the Spirit Pills that could restore Spiritual Energy!

If they ran out of pills, they would no longer be able to replenish their Spiritual Energy, and if the Astral Wind didn't calm down by then, only death awaited them.

Qi He Feng even took the initiative to distribute his spare Spirit Pills, but it was still just a drop in the bucket and didn't play a big role.

Half a day later, the situation grew worse.

The atmosphere inside the cave was dark and gloomy, with people constantly shouting and swearing to vent their anger.

Qi He Feng's brows are furrowed, but he couldn't think of a way to save the situation.

He could only look at Yang Kai, his eyes full of helplessness.

Yang Kai glanced at him and snorted. Although he felt some displeasure, the situation had reached a point where he could no longer remain uninvolved.

After telling Old Ban and Zhang Ruo Xi to stay where they were, he slowly got up and walked towards the entrance of the cave step by step.

The others looked at him curiously, not knowing what he was going to do.

At the entrance of the cave, Yang Kai took a breath, and with a flick of his wrist, his Myriad Sword appeared and his aura suddenly erupted.

\*Weng...\*

The entire cave seemed to tremble.

"That's..."

"An Emperor Realm Master!"

"There was an Emperor here all along?!"

All eyes turned to Yang Kai, who was standing at the entrance. The stalwart back now suddenly had a brave and heroic air about it, and even the group at the entrance stopped and turned around to stare at him.

Although Yang Kai performed well before, he didn't unleash his full might, and the other cultivators were too worried about their own lives to pay him much heed.

It was only at this moment that they realized Yang Kai was actually an Emperor Realm Master!

No wonder! No wonder the three cultivators in his group were completely unharmed! No wonder every time it was their turn, the number of Yin Souls would become scarce. They'd thought it was strange before but didn't dwell on it. Now, they understood!

"Haha, we're saved! We're saved!"

"Damn, I thought I would die here this time. It seems the Heavens still don't want me to visit yet."

"Sir, please hurry and give those Yin Souls a good bashing!"

At this time, everyone was shouting and cheering. They seemed to believe that the Yin Souls would all disappear as long as Yang Kai acted.

Chapter 2544, Wrinkly-faced Man

Qi He Feng said solemnly, "Many thanks, Sir."

Although Yang Kai's hand had been forced, it didn't change the fact that he would become everyone's life-saving benefactor if he managed to beat back all of these Yin Souls; therefore, it was natural for Qi He Feng to thank him.

"You guys should move to the rear," Yang Kai said as his body flickered and appeared before the group defending the entrance.

Without saying a word, the four cultivators immediately stepped back and retreated behind him.

As soon as they retreated, countless Yin Souls roared and rushed forward madly. Each one looked so ferocious that it made the other cultivators sweat for Yang Kai, worried if he would be able to stop them alone.

An Emperor Realm Master was indeed strong, but he had been fighting and consuming energy for a day and a half already just like the rest of them.

Now that he had become their only hope, it was only natural that no one wanted to see him have an accident.

However, in front of everyone's eyes, Yang Kai was as steady as a mountain and didn't move until the Yin Souls were almost upon him. At the last moment, his Spiritual Energy suddenly burst out like a tsunami.

\*Hong...\*

It seemed like an invisible wall in front of Yang Kai suddenly formed, deflecting all of the Yin Souls and preventing them from getting closer. Moreover, under some invisible pressure, the Yin Souls disintegrated at an astonishing speed, and several shrill cries rang out.

It was like watching snowflakes under the scorching sun. Wherever the sun passed, the snowflakes melted away.

This was not the end. The Myriads Sword in Yang Kai's hand swept out, the fierce attack rising and spreading all around like the light of the moon and stars.

A large number of Yin Souls was wiped out yet again.

Although this kind of attack was not as effective as one using Divine Sense, Yang Kai was an Emperor Realm Master, and his Myriads Sword was also an Emperor Artifact, so it was impossible for the results to be ordinary.

The lowest level of Yin Souls and even the Ghost Generals were reduced to dust as soon as they came into contact with his sword wave. Some of the more powerful Ghost Lords were barely able to hang on to their lives, but they were still pushed to the edge.

Seeing this scene, the morale of the cultivators inside the cave rose greatly and the despair in their eyes vanished, replaced by incomparable excitement.

"You don't look very well, my friend," Qi He Feng suddenly turned his head and asked a wrinkly-faced man beside him, his face full of concern, "Are your injuries severe?"

When he heard this, a look of panic flashed in the wrinkly-faced man's eyes. However, he soon covered it up and said, "Many thanks for your concern, Brother Qi. My injuries are not severe. Simply getting some rest will do."

"That's good. With this Sir's help, we will be able to escape this crisis safely. He is no doubt our saviour."

The man didn't know what Qi He Feng was getting at and felt uneasy, but even so, he could only smile and nod, "Indeed."

"Which Sect are you from, friend?" Qi He Feng continued to ask.

"I don't belong to a Sect. I'm a lone wanderer," the wrinkly-faced man replied.

Qi He Feng raised his brow, "You must be quite talented, to be able to cultivate to the Third-Order Dao Source Realm with only your own effort. Are you interested in joining the Qi Family Fort?"

"I am honoured by Brother Qi's offer, but I'm used to being free. I don't wish to join any great forces yet."

"Very well." After that, Qi He Feng stopped talking and turned his head to watch Yang Kai.

The wrinkly-faced man frowned slightly and shot Qi He Feng a furtive glance. His expression had been normal, and it seemed that he had just been making casual conversation, so the wrinkly-faced man sighed in relief.

At the entrance, Yang Kai was like an impassable mountain, and with each swing of his sword, the Yin Souls were pushed back.

Occasionally, a few would slip through and be killed by the cultivators in the back. The Yin Souls had no way to break into the cave.

At this moment, everyone relaxed and was no longer anxious.

The crisis would pass as long as Yang Kai held on. The strength of an Emperor Realm Master was formidable as expected and truly awe-inspiring; however, they were afraid Yang Kai would run out of energy before everything ended. After all, one's strength was always limited.

Alas, half a day later, their worries came true.

By then, it became obvious that Yang Kai's attacks were no longer as powerful as before. The force behind both his sword waves and Soul attacks were greatly reduced, and most noticeably, the number of Yin Souls slipping through his defence had increased.

However, this wasn't surprising. The fact that Yang Kai was able to hold on for half a day on his own was a testament to his great strength; after all, the four-person groups before could only hold on for a stick of incense's worth of time.

After another half-day, Yang Kai's hand trembled slightly, and his face turned pale. It was apparent he was nearing his limit.

Qi He Feng stood up, "Sir, please go back and rest for a while. You can leave the rest to us."

"Yes, Sir. If you collapse, we will all suffer too. You should take a rest," the other cultivators quickly agreed and urged.

Their concern wasn't truly genuine, but Yang Kai was now their main pillar of strength. Without him, their chances of surviving would be too low.

Upon hearing this, Yang Kai pondered for a moment and nodded, "Alright."

He had been defending for an entire day, while the rest of the cultivators were almost completely covered. They should have no problem taking the vanguard position for a period of time.

At that moment, all of a sudden, the wind howling outside the cave weakened drastically.

Everyone was stunned and carefully stared out in the direction of the entrance.

After a moment, someone said in a trembling voice, "The Astral Wind is ending."

"Hahaha, it's ending! It's ending!"

"It's really over! We're saved! We're saved!"

Upon realizing that the Astral Wind was about to end, everyone began to shout and yell excitedly, as though they had picked up an amazing treasure and wanted to share the news with the entire world.

What made them even happier was that when the sounds of howling wind began to abate, the Yin Souls seemed to have received some kind of signal and retreated back into the strange fog. In just the blink of an eye, the crisis that plagued them for two days was over.

Everyone was overjoyed and one by one, they crowded at the entrance of the cave and peered out.

They saw that only a weak wind remained, and there was not a single Yin Soul in sight.

The disaster was really over.

“Watch out, Sir!” Qi He Feng suddenly cried out loudly.

Just then, a turbid light burst out from a certain part of the cave and rushed straight towards Yang Kai’s head. Yang Kai’s body suddenly flickered, as if he might fall at any time.

The next moment, a figure rushed behind Yang Kai and aimed at his forehead with a fierce palm.

“You dare!” Qi He Feng roared and prepared to give chase, but the attack had happened too suddenly and he could only watch as the blow landed on the unprepared Yang Kai.

The others, too, began to panic and hastily spread out and put up their guards despite not knowing what had happened.

\*Hong...\*

A muffled sound rang out, and as soon as his palm landed on Yang Kai’s forehead, the perpetrator revealed a vicious smile.

After the successful blow, he immediately ran out of the cave at the fastest speed, because he knew that if he stayed, he would be besieged by the other cultivators; after all, Yang Kai had saved the lives of all the people here and was regarded as their benefactor.

When their benefactor was attacked, they would have to pursue the perpetrator whether they were willing to or not.

Before the man left, he turned his head and looked at Zhang Ruo Xi, his face filled with pride and triumph.

However, he saw that Zhang Ruo Xi wasn’t panicking at all. Instead, she was looking at him coldly and made no move to stop him.

This situation made the man’s heart jump, and a wave of unease washed over him.

“Do you want to run after hitting me?” A voice sounded from behind him, making his hair stand on end.

The man’s gaze snapped in Yang Kai’s direction, only to see the young man looking back at him mockingly. His pale face was now rosy as could be, and gone was the weak aura around his body.

There was no sign of exhaustion or weakness.

[How is this possible?]

Even though Yang Kai was an Emperor Realm Master, he had been defending the cave entrance for an entire day. How could he not be exhausted?

The only possible explanation was that... he had been hiding his true strength from the start!

Upon realizing this, the man broke out in cold sweat.

Yang Kai stretched out his hand and easily grasped the man's ankle, exerting just a small amount of force, causing bones to crack loudly.

"Ahh!" The man screamed miserably. He wanted to use his strength to resist, but was shocked to find that under Yang Kai's grasp, his cultivation was suppressed, rendering him completely helpless.

Yang Kai threw the man back into the cave, slamming it against a wall and causing blood to spurt from his lips.

"What's going on?"

"What's the situation?"

"What's wrong? What happened?"

It was only then that other cultivators reacted; however, they were confused by the scene before them and couldn't tell why Yang Kai had attacked the other cultivator.

Qi He Feng answered their questions with a cold expression on his face, "This man had ulterior motives. He took advantage of Sir's exhaustion to launch a sneak attack. Unforgivable!"

Everyone was shocked and looked at the cultivator who had fallen to the ground.

It was the wrinkly-faced man Qi He Feng had been talking to before.

The unbearable pain in his ankle caused his wrinkled face to appear even more wrinkled, and his forehead was dripping with beads of sweat.

"How despicable! If it wasn't for Sir, we would be dead right now! You not only didn't repay gratitude but also tried to sneak attack Sir?! Do you have any conscience?"

"Such a despicable person deserves to be punished with the pain of Soul extraction and refinement! This one only knows a little about Soul refinement, if you wish for it, Sir, just say the word and this one will make him regret being born into this world!"

"Heh, heh, I also know a bit about Soul refinement. If Sir wishes for it, I can also help and guarantee that he lives a life worse than death for ten days to half a month."

As soon as the wrinkled-face man heard this, his face turned pale as snow, and his whole body trembled.

Chapter 2545, You Recognize Me

“Speak! Why did you try to attack Sir?” One of the cultivators shouted, glaring at the wrinkly-faced man.

The wrinkly-faced man clenched his teeth and said nothing despite the pain.

“Heh, heh, it looks like you’re pretty tough. I guess we’ll have to give you a taste of having your Soul pulled out and refined for you to speak!” Another one approached with a sinister smile.

“Hahaha!” The wrinkly-faced man suddenly burst out laughing. His laughter contained so much madness that it immediately stunned everyone.

A moment later, he sneered and said coldly, “You want to refine my Soul? You’ll need to have the courage first! Do you know where I come from? If you dare to hurt a single hair on my head, my Sect will not let you off!”

Everyone’s faces changed as soon as they heard these words. The intimidation from the possibility that the wrinkly-faced man came from a great background was quite effective.

When they stopped to think about it, it did make sense. The wrinkly-faced man wouldn’t dare to attack an Emperor Realm Master if he didn’t have something like a top Sect backing him.

Perhaps Yang Kai had offended the Sect somehow, so the wrinkly-faced man was sent to assassinate him.

Just minutes ago, the other cultivators were only focused on repaying Yang Kai for saving their lives and didn’t think much about the situation; however, now that they had stopped and looked back on it, they found the matter to be quite strange.

“Hahaha, scared now?” Seeing the looks on the cultivators’ faces, the wrinkly-faced man sneered, “I advise you all to mind your own business. Don’t get in my way...”

\*Pa...\*

Before he could finish speaking, Zhang Ruo Xi suddenly flashed in front of him, and a sound slap landed on his face.

The wrinkly-faced man was slapped silly. It wasn’t until several moments later that he recovered from the shock. Over ten teeth had been knocked out of his mouth, and blood was now dripping from its corners.

Although Yang Kai was unharmed by the wrinkly-faced man’s sneak attack, Zhang Ruo Xi was enraged nonetheless. She never imagined there could be someone so ungrateful in this world. Right after Yang Kai saved his life, he tried to kill him!

The death of a person like him wasn’t worth pitying!

If she hadn’t tried her best to suppress her anger, the wrinkly-faced man would’ve likely died from her slap.

The other cultivators were afraid of him, but she wasn’t.

It seemed that she was truly enraged this time, because an overwhelmingly violent aura surrounded her body, making her appear like a wild beast.

Everyone was stunned and looked at her, dumbfounded. They never thought a beautiful girl like her could have such a terrifying side.

“The wind has stopped howling, and the Yin Souls have dispersed. I won’t be seeing everyone out,” Yang Kai said indifferently, his expression unchanged.

The other cultivators quickly understood his meaning. No matter what grudge he shared with the wrinkly-faced man, and no matter what the wrinkly-faced man’s background was, he didn’t want nor need anyone else to interfere.

It was pointless to insist on staying when they were too afraid to do anything. What the eyes do not see, the heart does not grieve, why draw unnecessary fire to themselves?

After thinking about it, someone immediately cupped his fists and said, “Sir, this one will engrave today’s gratitude in his heart. I wish Sir great fortune and a safe return. Farewell!”

As soon as he finished speaking, the man ran out of the cave and quickly disappeared into the strange fog.

After one person left, the rest quickly understood the situation and followed.

A moment later, Yang Kai turned to look at Qi He Feng with great interest and asked, “You’re not going?”

Everyone else had left except him, which made Yang Kai speculate. And indeed, Qi He Feng shook his head, “This Qi has something to say to Sir.”

Yang Kai grinned meaningfully, “So, you recognize me!”

It was not a question, but a statement. When Qi He Feng first introduced himself, he’d subconsciously glanced at Yang Kai, which made the latter somewhat suspicious. Now, he was certain.

When Qi He Feng heard his words, he couldn’t help but smile, “You noticed, Sir.”

“Was it Qi Hai?”

“Indeed, it was the Young Fort Lord,” Qi He Feng responded, “After his return from the Shattered Star Sea a few days ago, the Young Fort Lord gathered some confidants and described your likeness to us. He instructed us to keep our eyes open since you told him you would be coming to the Eastern Territory, Sir.”

Yang Kai snorted, “I only said that I was going to the Eastern Territory, but not that I would go to the Ancient Lands. Seeing you here... What a coincidence.”

“I believe you have heard of the restaurant in the city outside. That is actually owned by my Qi Family,” Qi He Feng explained awkwardly.

Upon hearing that, Yang Kai finally realized why the owner of the restaurant had wanted to give him ten bottles of Wild Wine for no reason. At that time, he'd already been recognized by the people of Qi Family Fort.

"We heard that Sir would be entering the Ancient Lands, so we came in early and waited inside the passageway!" Qi He Feng carefully picked out his words while constantly observing Yang Kai's expression in fear that he would be displeased.

Yang Kai, of course, was not very happy, and said coldly, "I see your Qi Family Fort's influence spreads quite far."

"Please calm your anger, Sir!" Qi He Feng said hastily, "We only dared to inquire into Sir's whereabouts because the Young Fort Lord..."

"I know!" Yang Kai coldly snorted, "The Heavenly Frost Earth Rain. You can go back and tell Qi Hai that I can't cure the poison! I no longer have 'it'."

"Ah?" Qi He Feng exclaimed in shock, "Then... Where is it?"

"What? Do I need to tell you that?" A cold light flashed through Yang Kai's eyes. The existence of the Phoenix True Fire was not something that should be easily disclosed to others. Although Yang Kai believed that Qi Hai wouldn't expose the news broadly, with enough clues one would only need to make a few assumptions to conclude that the Phoenix True Fire was with Yang Kai.

At that time, trouble would find him on its own.

Therefore, Yang Kai was dissatisfied with Qi Hai's conduct this time. He hadn't promised Qi Hai anything and only told him that he would go to the Eastern Territory in the future. He'd never agreed to get involved.

"Of course not, Sir!" Qi He Feng was shocked and quickly cupped his fists.

"Good, then leave and tell Qi Hai that if he dares to do this again, I will go to Qi Family Fort personally to give him my 'regards'." Yang Kai waved his hand impatiently.

Qi He Feng's face changed. Qi Family Fort was formidable in its own right, but nothing good would come out of offending an Emperor Realm Master like Yang Kai; however, he couldn't just go back without doing what his Young Fort Lord had instructed him to do either!

After thinking about it, he cupped his fists and said, "Sir, this Qi has one more thing to say."

Yang Kai looked at him coldly, "If you say one more word about the detoxifying, I will throw you out."

"No, no. It's not about the detoxifying. It's about... this person!"

As he spoke, he pointed to the wrinkly-faced man.

"You know where he's from?" Yang Kai asked in surprise.

He was also curious. He was not familiar with the Eastern Territory and had barely entered the Ancient Lands Passageway when he encountered an assassin. It was truly quite strange.

Qi He Feng replied, "Sir, this Qi believes that this man is from Netherworld Sect!"

"Netherworld Sect!" Yang Kai narrowed his eyes and turned to stare at the wrinkly-faced man, whose expression was still twisted in pain, and then turned back, "Do you have proof?"

"Yes. In the past month, several disciples of Netherworld Sect were seen entering the Ancient Lands Passageway. According to the information I received from one of the Qi Family Fort's disciples, these Netherworld Sect disciples stayed inside the passageway as though waiting for someone. The leader of the group is an Elder from Netherworld Sect, Hua Fei Chen. He is a Second-Order Emperor Realm Master."

"Hua Fei Chen..." Yang Kai murmured to himself. The name was unfamiliar.

"You may not know Hua Fei Chen, Sir; however, there is someone in his group that Sir should be familiar with!" Qi He Feng said.

"Who?"

"Yin Le Sheng!"

Yang Kai raised an eyebrow and grinned, "Is he here too? Great! Enemies really do meet on a narrow road."

Qi He Feng was stunned by Yang Kai's evident anticipation. There were many disciples from the Netherworld Sect waiting for him, not to mention that this group was headed by a Second-Order Emperor Realm Master, yet Yang Kai wasn't afraid; as a matter of fact, he appeared to be very pleased!

According to his Young Fort Lord, Yang Kai was only a Third-Order Dao Source Realm Master when they met in the Shattered Star Sea. Therefore, he should only be a First-Order Emperor Realm Master now. No matter what kind of fortuitous encounter he had in the Shattered Star Sea, it should still be impossible for him to rival an old and experienced Master like Hua Fei Chen.

"We were confused as to what the people from the Netherworld Sect were up to in the passageway, but since Qi Family Fort is the great force controlling this area, we kept an eye on them. It wasn't until Sir arrived at the desolate city that the Young Fort Lord realized it must be related to you, Sir. We'd heard that Sir and Yin Le Sheng had a very unpleasant argument in the Shattered Star Sea and deduced that the other side was holding a grudge. However, we do not know how they knew Sir would be coming to the Ancient Lands," Qi He Feng said with a confused look on his face.

"Of course they'd know," Yang Kai snorted.

The news that Xiao Xiao was in the Ancient Lands was revealed by Yin Le Sheng himself.

After seeing Yang Kai's reaction back then, Yin Le Sheng must've guessed that he would come to the Ancient Lands to search for Xiao Xiao. Thus, he gathered people and laid in ambush, knowing that Yang Kai would appear sooner or later.

It seemed that the loss Yin Le Sheng suffered in the Shattered Star Sea was too much to swallow, and he held a great grudge because of it. It hadn't been long since the Shattered Star Sea closed, and he was already prepared to set up a trap to kill him.

As for the wrinkly-faced man, he was likely sent out as a scout to track Yang Kai's whereabouts. Little did they know the wrinkly-faced man would try to act on his own and launch a sneak attack on Yang Kai, which ultimately resulted in their plan falling one step short of success.

"Yin Le Sheng... you're dead this time!" Yang Kai sneered as he muttered to himself.

Last time, he let Yin Le Sheng go because he wanted to find out Xiao Xiao's whereabouts. They had signed a Soul Contract, and were bound by its terms, so Yang Kai couldn't kill him even though he wanted to.

Now that Yin Le Sheng had sent himself to his doorstep, Yang Kai naturally would not show any mercy.

Chapter 2546, It's Him

"Sir, Hua Fei Chen is an Elder of the Netherworld Sect. He became a Second-Order Emperor close to a hundred years ago and is now a renowned Master. Not only that, but Yin Le Sheng is now an Emperor Realm Master too. It would be best to stay away from them, Sir." Yang Kai's reaction stunned Qi He Feng; he had never met someone so ignorant to the immensity of Heaven and Earth. Yang Kai was clearly just a newly promoted Emperor Realm Master, yet he dared to take Hua Fei Chen lightly.

"Sir, it would be best to leave here first and think of a plan later," Qi He Feng urged.

"Yin Le Sheng also broke through to the Emperor Realm?" Yang Kai frowned, "When did that happen?"

"We are uncertain of the exact time, but we do know that he was an Emperor Realm Master when he left the Shattered Star Sea," Qi He Feng responded.

"It seems that he had quite a few fortuitous encounters there," Yang Kai mused to himself.

When they were in the Shattered Star Sea, Yin Le Sheng was only a Third-Order Dao Source Realm Master. Yang Kai himself was only able to break through after witnessing the battle between two Great Emperors and studying the auras released by the clash. He wondered what kind of fortuitous encounter Yin Le Sheng had.

However, he wasn't very surprised, as the Shattered Star Sea was filled with opportunities, and Yin Le Sheng had a good aptitude.

After sorting out his thoughts, Yang Kai bent down and lifted the wrinkly-faced man's chin, forcing him to meet his gaze. Next, Yang Kai's right eye flashed with golden light as he released some Spiritual Energy and pressured the other's consciousness.

"Are you from the Netherworld Sect?" Yang Kai asked.

As a Third-Order Dao Source Realm Master, how could the wrinkly-faced man resist? He succumbed and responded within a breath.

“Yes.”

“Am I the reason you guys came to the Ancient Lands Passageway?”

“Yes.”

“How many people are there, and are there any Emperor Realm Masters other than Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng?”

“Twenty-five people came. Other than Elder Hua and Senior Brother Yin, there are no Emperor Realm Masters.”

Yang Kai coldly snorted, “Is Yin Le Sheng stupid? He thinks this Young Master can be defeated with just that? What paltry tricks do you have in store for me?”

“My fellow Brothers will set up the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array. Once you are trapped inside, Elder Hua and Senior Brother Yin will enter and personally kill you,” the wrinkly-faced man responded.

“The Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array!” Qi He Feng suddenly exclaimed.

Yang Kai looked at him, “What kind of Spirit Array is that?”

“It is one of the Netherworld Sect’s most powerful Trapping Arrays. Once it is set up, the person inside would be suppressed inside like a ghost and have their vitality constantly sucked out of them. Moreover, the area covered by the array will be completely isolated from the outside world, making it impossible to break out,” Qi He Feng explained with a strange expression on his face.

Afterward, he frowned and added, “Why would they use the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array... isn’t that going too far?”

Evidently, in Qi He Feng’s eyes, Hua Fei Chen was already giving Yang Kai enough face by dealing with him personally; after all, no matter how powerful Yang Kai was, it should be impossible for him to escape a First and Second-Order Emperor Realm Masters’ siege. Sooner or later, he would be brought down.

The collaboration of the two was more than enough to capture Yang Kai, so why did they decide to set up the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array too? One must know that the setting up the array required the use of Netherworld Purgatory Banners that the disciples of the Netherworld Sect needed to refine using their own Blood Essence.

If the array was broken, the artifacts would be destroyed completely, and each disciple would suffer the Ten Thousand Ghost Biting Backlash that made life feel worse than death.

The Sect Defending Array covering the Netherworld Sect itself was a gigantic Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array with three Emperor Artifact rank Netherworld Purgatory Banners as its Cores. If an outsider was to invade, the array would activate and trap them inside with no way to escape.

Thus, the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array set up using over twenty Netherworld Sect disciples was undoubtedly formidable.

Was Yang Kai so powerful that the Netherworld Sect had to take such extreme measures to deal with him? Qi He Feng simply couldn't figure it out.

However, what he didn't know was that Yin Le Sheng had insisted on using this array because he knew Yang Kai was proficient at using Space Principles. Hua Fei Chen might be stronger than Yang Kai, but wanting to kill him without cutting off his path of escape was all but impossible.

Since ancient times, cultivators who were proficient in the Dao of Space were the hardest to deal with. In order to kill them, one must first think of a way to seal them in a certain region in order to prevent them from simply escaping.

"Isolated from the outside world... Hmph," Yang Kai coldly snorted. He immediately understood what the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array was for.

"Sir, you should retreat. If your purpose for entering the Ancient Lands is to look for something, our Qi Family Fort can help. You would only need to wait for our message," Qi He Feng said, looking at Yang Kai eagerly.

He believed that with Yang Kai's current strength, throwing himself into the array would be the same as throwing himself into a grave.

"Your Qi Family Fort cannot help with what I'm seeking." Yang Kai shook his head.

He was not looking for treasure, but Xiao Xiao. How could he let the Qi Family Fort help with that?

As he spoke, Yang Kai's outstretched hand jerked, and the wrinkly-faced man immediately fell over. On the outside, there was not the slightest sign of injury, but his insides had already turned to dust. He couldn't be more dead.

"Let's go," Yang Kai said to Zhang Ruo Xi and Old Ban. There was nothing more he needed to know. As he spoke, he wrapped his Emperor Qi around the two and disappeared like a ghost.

"Sir! Sir!" Qi He Feng yelled twice, but Yang Kai had already left. Qi He Feng ran out after him, but the strange fog quickly obstructed his sight and Divine Sense.

Qi He Feng stood in one spot for a moment, then he stamped his foot and quickly went on his way.

It would be impossible to find Yang Kai again. He had waited inside the cave for him, but now that he was gone, so Qi He Feng had to send word back to Qi Family Fort as soon as possible so that the Young Fort Lord could decide what to do next.

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Fifty kilometres away from the original location of Yang Kai's group, in another cave.

This cave was much larger than the one Yang Kai's group hid and could accommodate over twenty without feeling crowded.

The people inside the cave were all wearing the same clothes and were from the same Sect.

Their leader was a Second-Order Emperor who was wearing a traditional-style robe. He appeared to be around fifty years old, but his face looked rosy and young.

This person was Elder Hua Fei Chen of the Netherworld Sect.

Sitting beside him was Yin Le Sheng, whose venomous gaze had been staring into the surging strange fog as though wanting to pierce through its depths. There was a cold and unsettling smile on his face.

Whenever he recalled his encounter with Yang Kai in the Shattered Star Sea, he would have trouble eating and sleeping.

He had never suffered such a great loss since he became a cultivator. He had always been the one to crush others with absolute strength and never expected that one day, someone of the same level would oppress him.

He couldn't stand it.

Worse, in order to survive last time, he even had to lower himself and flatter Yang Kai. Yin Le Sheng reckoned that if he didn't have information Yang Kai was interested in, he would've died at that time. In the end, he had to rely on a Soul Contract to stay alive.

Back when they were in the Starlight Corridor, Yang Kai wasn't his match at all. He never expected that in just less than ten years, Yang Kai would advance to such heights.

Who knew how monstrous Yang Kai would become if he was given a few more years? Thus, Yin Le Sheng had to get rid of Yang Kai once and for all, like cutting weeds and pulling out their roots. Yin Le Sheng was certain that if he allowed Yang Kai to grow further, his life would become exceedingly difficult.

Therefore, as soon as he returned to his Sect, he asked his Honoured Master to send Elder Hua Fei Chen to the Ancient Lands Passageway with over twenty disciples to help him kill Yang Kai.

With the assistance of Hua Fei Chen, the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array, and his own trump cards, there was no way Yang Kai would be able to survive!

Yin Le Sheng could already imagine the wonderful scene of Yang Kai falling to his knees and begging for mercy.

Suddenly, a loud voice shouted, "Elder, we have bad news!"

His reverie interrupted, Yin Le Sheng was somewhat displeased and turned to see a Netherworld Sect disciple standing beside Hua Fei Chen, an ugly expression on his face.

"What's the matter?" Yin Le Sheng asked with a frown.

Hua Fei Chen also opened his eyes and looked at him calmly.

"Senior Brother Yao... is dead," the disciple said in a trembling voice

"Who killed him?" Yin Le Sheng asked.

Although there were many hidden dragons and crouching tigers in the Ancient Lands Passageway, the Netherworld Sect was a name that caused those in the Eastern Territory to tremble and obey. Who would dare to kill one of their disciples so casually?

“It seems to be... this man,” said the disciple, revealing a bead in his palm. An illusory phantom appeared from it, reflecting the scene of Yang Kai’s hand crushing the wrinkly-faced man’s five viscera and six organs.

This was a mysterious technique that could replay the scene of the wrinkly-faced man’s death clearly to Hua Fei Chen and his group.

“Yang Kai...” Yin Le Sheng clenched his teeth, glaring at the image of Yang Kai in the illusory image. His eyes turned red as soon as he saw this enemy of his.

“That’s him! That’s the bastard who bullied this Young Lady! So he really did enter the Ancient Lands Passageway! Hua Fei Chen, you need to catch him so this Young Lady can torture him.” On the other side of the cave, a young red-clothed woman suddenly jumped up and cried out, glaring at Yang Kai’s figure with gnashed teeth.

This young woman was the one who had troubled Old Ban; she had met up with the Netherworld Sect at an unknown time. Old Fu, who was protecting her, was also present; however, the two Third-Order Dao Source Realm Master guards were nowhere in sight, their life or death unknown.

She was only a Third-Order Dao Source Realm Master, yet she showed no respect for Hua Fei Chen, an Emperor Realm Master.

Despite that, Hua Fei Chen wasn’t angry at all. There was only some helplessness in his expression.

Yin Le Sheng turned to the red-clothed girl, the corners of his lips turning upwards as he asked, “Young Lady Lin’er, you mean... The person you want to punish is him?”

“That’s right!” The girl named Lin’er, gritting her teeth, fire almost shooting from her eyes, “I would recognize him even if he turned to ashes! You, hurry up and catch him for me! I want to see him kneel down in front of me and beg for mercy!”

Chapter 2547, The Same Person

Two days prior, this Young Lady had suddenly stumbled into the cave where the Netherworld Sect’s members were hiding and ordered Hua Fei Chen and others to teach someone a lesson for her.

She said that the man had brazenly bullied her.

Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng felt their heads hurt when they heard this demand; after all, they were here to ambush Yang Kai and had no time to waste on other people.

If it was someone else, Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng wouldn’t even need to pay attention to them; however, this Young Lady wasn’t just anybody. This woman’s background was so great that even the Netherworld Sect’s Sect Master would need to treat her politely, let alone Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng.

In their hearts, they were cursing the blind fool who offended this Young Lady. If it weren't for him, they wouldn't be caught in this mess. Lending a hand wasn't an issue, but there was the chance their movements would alert Yang Kai.

However, no matter how reluctant they were, they couldn't disobey this Young Lady's orders.

Just as they decided to grit their teeth and bear with it, the wind began to howl. Their group was forced to stay inside a cave for two days and couldn't go outside until now.

Now, however, Yin Le Sheng was quite happy, "Young Lady Lin'er, it seems... we are dealing with the same person," he said with a smile.

"The same person?" A shocked expression appeared on the girl named Lin'er's face, and even Old Fu's eyes widened, "Such a coincidence?"

Yin Le Sheng slowly rose, "I will not hide anything from you, Young Lady. That man's name is Yang Kai, and I have some grievances with him. The reason I came to the Ancient Lands is to deal with him!"

Upon hearing this, a strange expression appeared on Old Fu's face, "It's only one person, yet you've brought so many people and even prepared the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array. Don't you think your Netherworld Sect is giving him too much face?"

"You mustn't underestimate him, Old Fu," Yin Le Sheng responded solemnly, "I'm not sure if you've confronted him before, but he's not as simple as he seems."

Old Fu's face turned red, then he nodded, "Indeed."

After thinking back to his confrontation with Yang Kai in the desolate city, Old Fu knew that Yin Le Sheng was right. This young man was clearly a First-Order Emperor Realm Master like him, yet when they fought, he was completely suppressed to the point of not being able to fight back at all.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have had to turn to the Netherworld Sect for assistance; after all, as an Emperor Realm Master himself, there were only a few things he couldn't deal with personally.

"Sheer strength aside, that man is also skilled in a truly esoteric power. That's what I'm worried about the most. If not for that, I wouldn't have requested for the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array to be used," Yin Le Sheng coldly snorted, with a little jealousy on his face.

"What power?" Old Fu asked.

"The Dao of Space!"

"Sii..." Old Fu drew in a sharp breath, his shock could not be concealed, "Did you say... The Dao of Space?" he asked.

"Indeed," Yin Le Sheng's expression was gloomy as he nodded, "Moreover, he is so skilled at using Space Force that he seems to be able to tear space at will."

"For there to be such a thing..." Old Fu's eyes flickered, then he asked, "Could it be... Is he the disciple of 'that' man from Spirit Beast Island?"

Although he didn't name who he was referring to, both Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng knew who he was talking about.

If Yang Kai really was that person's disciple, then things would become troublesome. That person was ranked first below the Ten Great Emperors and was known as the most powerful Emperor in the Star Boundary. Even without his title as strongest Emperor Realm Master though, that man still lived on Spirit Beast Island and was a highly valued direct subordinate of Martial Beast Great Emperor.

Who would dare to touch his disciple? Making an enemy of him meant making an enemy of Spirit Beast Island. Not even Old Fu and the girl named Lin'er could afford those consequences.

Therefore, Old Fu couldn't help but feel worried. What if they had provoked someone they shouldn't have?

However, to his relief, Yin Le Sheng shook his head, "As far as I know, there is no relationship between the little brat and that Sir, so you can rest assured."

"How do you know?" Old Fu asked cautiously. As the Young Lady's bodyguard, he needed to be a careful and thorough person.

Yin Le Sheng smiled and responded, "Because he is from the Southern Territory!"

"The Southern Territory..." Upon hearing this, Old Fu finally put down his worries, "In that case, he should have no ties with that person." He paused and continued, "So, the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array is for sealing space!"

"Indeed," Yin Le Sheng said with a hideous grin, "I'd like to see how he'll be able to escape without his Space Abilities."

Hua Fei Chen suddenly interjected, "Is that little brat already an Emperor Realm Master?"

The disciple surnamed Yao that Yang Kai killed was a Third-Order Dao Source Realm Master, and Old Fu and the Young Lady had also suffered at his hand. This showed that Yang Kai was likely already an Emperor Realm Master.

"Yes, what did you think he was?" Old Fu looked at him strangely.

Hua Fei Chen frowned, "Martial Nephew Yin said that when they were in the Shattered Star Sea, the little brat was only a Dao Source Realm Master. To think..."

"His aptitude is also astonishing, and the opportunities that exist within the Shattered Star Sea are truly Heaven-defying; thus, it is not surprising that he was able to break through to the Emperor Realm there. Wasn't I the same? If he wasn't an Emperor Realm Master, I wouldn't have asked Martial Uncle Hua and my fellow brothers to lend a hand," Yin Le Sheng explained with a slight smile.

He looked as though he had expected it.

"The Shattered Star Sea... He was in the Shattered Star Sea?" Old Fu was surprised, "You mean he broke through to the Emperor Realm not long ago?"

A young man who had just broken through to the Emperor Realm, possibly without having stabilized his new cultivation and was still unfamiliar with Emperor Qi, was able to completely suppress him. Old Fu couldn't believe it.

[Am I just too old?]

"Rest assured, Old Fu. No matter what kind of opportunities he had, he will surely die here today," Yin Le Sheng said, his expression grim.

"What are you muttering about?" The Young Lady, Lin'er, was silently listening for a long time and finally grew impatient, "I'm telling you to catch that man and bring him to this Young Lady, so why are you all still standing here for?"

Yin Le Sheng turned his head and said with a smile, "We will need to use some means to deal with that man, but please rest assured, Young Lady Lin'er. Within five days, this Yin will surely deliver him to you. At that time, Young Lady Lin'er will be able to do whatever she wishes with him."

The girl named Lin'er snorted, "It'd better be that way. When the time comes, this Young Lady will strip him of his clothes and throw him to a place filled with people so they can laugh at him!"

She looked so vicious and gleeful, as though this was the heaviest punishment she could think of for Yang Kai.

Previously, she had also threatened Zhang Ruo Xi with these same words.

Yin Le Sheng and others watched on awkwardly, then Hua Fei Chen spoke up.

"Since Martial Nephew Yao has died, we cannot stay here any longer. It is possible that brat surnamed Yang now knows about our trap and will try to escape it. We must change our plans."

Yin Le Sheng nodded, "We will do as Martial Uncle suggests."

As soon as they finished their discussion, the group moved out. Old Fu and the Young Lady named Lin'er naturally followed.

...

Deep in the strange fog, Old Ban was leading the way, with Zhang Ruo Xi behind him and Yang Kai at the rear. The few ignorant Yin Souls that appeared were easily and swiftly dealt with.

After they'd walked for a long time, Yang Kai suddenly asked, "How much further, Old Ban?"

Old Ban's voice sounded from the front, "We are still barely halfway. It will take at least two more days for us to reach the exit of this passageway."

"Two days..." Yang Kai pondered for a while and said, "You should have seen what happened before, Old Ban. Some of my enemies seem to be waiting for me ahead. They're not easy to deal with, so you should head back now. We'll go the rest of the way alone."

However, Old Ban grinned meaningfully, "This old man has heard a few things about the Netherworld Sect, and indeed, I cannot afford to provoke them; however, in this Ancient Lands Passage, I am confident in my ability to come and go at will, so Little Brother doesn't have to worry about me. Since

I've promised to guide you out of the passageway safely, I will not leave halfway. This old man's title may not be valuable, but it's not to be underestimated either."

Of course, he understood that Yang Kai didn't want to implicate him, but inside this Ancient Lands Passageway, Old Ban was fearless. If he met an enemy, he could simply dart into the strange fog, then not even a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master would be able to find him.

His familiarity with this place is his greatest assurance.

After a pause, he continued, "You can also rest assured, Little Brother. Even if they wanted to ambush you, they wouldn't choose to do it in this damned place. This old man reckons they're waiting at the exit, so I will be fine as long as I leave before then."

What he said was quite reasonable. Even if the Netherworld Sect was planning to ambush Yang Kai, they wouldn't do it in the obscurity of this strange fog; therefore, the road ahead should be safe.

Thus, Yang Kai was no longer reluctant and nodded, "Many thanks then, Old Ban."

There was nothing more to say along the way, and the three continued to move forward.

Since the most dangerous Falling Thunder and Astral Wind had passed, they no longer had to make any major detours. According to Old Ban, the Ancient Lands Passageway would be relatively safe for another month, and they would only need to pay attention to the occasional Yin Souls that attacked.

Yang Kai was worried that the Ghost King hadn't given up; after all, he had killed so many Yin Souls when he was in the cave. However, after walking for half a day, Yang Kai realized that he was overthinking things.

Perhaps the Ghost King knew that there was nothing it could do to Yang Kai, even if it attacked personally. What the eyes do not see, the heart does not grieve, so it decided to ignore Yang Kai.

As for the hundreds of Yin Souls that were killed... there was no lack of them in the Ancient Lands Passageway. It didn't matter how many were killed, since they could always be replaced.

The route Old Ban took was winding and irregular as usual, but with the guidance of the jade beads, the group of three stuck together and always kept a distance of three steps between them.

Chapter 2548, What is This?

Two days later, Yang Kai felt that the surrounding strange fog had thinned out a little. He wasn't sure if it was his imagination though.

Old Ban, who was walking in front of him, suddenly stopped and said, "We've almost reached the exit, Little Brother. The strange fog will no longer affect Divine Sense much. With your strength, you should be able to find the way out safely."

Hearing this, Yang Kai quickly released his Divine Sense to investigate his surroundings and sure enough, he was able to scan a far wider range than before.

As long as he could use his Divine Sense, he should be able to navigate through the strange fog without trouble; moreover, his Divine Sense would only become clearer as he moved closer to the exit.

“Many thanks for guiding us until now, Old Ban. Please be careful going back,” Yang Kai said, cupping his fists.

“You don’t have to worry about me, Little Brother,” Old Ban replied with a slight smile, “If you need this old man’s guidance on the day of your return, you can go to the cave over there and wait.”

He pointed in one direction and then continued, “This old man will go there once every month to guide people back through the Ancient Lands Passageway; however, the time isn’t fixed.”

Yang Kai understood his meaning, “Old Ban is doing two-way business.”

He could take people who wanted to enter the Ancient Lands, and then take people out when he exited. It was quite a good business.

“This old man’s cultivation is low. Although I am knowledgeable about the terrain, I will not be able to resist if I encounter a powerful Yin Soul. As a guide, I also receive the protection of those I’m guiding.”

“You’ve thought of things out quite meticulously,” Yang Kai nodded.

“Alright, this old man will leave now. I wish you safe travels, Little Brother, Young Lady,” Old Ban bid farewell before leaving in the direction he had pointed out earlier, presumably to wait for people to guide back.

As soon as the old man disappeared, Yang Kai turned his eyes to the front, and after looking for a moment, he said, “Ruo Xi. I’ll go the rest of the way alone.”

Zhang Ruo Xi’s face was filled with distress. Although she wanted to help Yang Kai, she was still too weak and would only be a burden if she stayed, so she had no choice but to grit her teeth and leave.

With the flash of light, Yang Kai hid Zhang Ruo Xi inside the Sealed World Bead, then he began to move forward.

The more he moved forward, the less influence the strange fog would have, and the wider the range that Yang Kai’s Divine Sense could detect.

Just as he was about to leave the passageway and set foot into the real wilderness, Yang Kai suddenly stopped and looked around.

Here, the strange fog was almost transparent and barely affected him, so he could sense his surroundings clearly.

It was quiet, without any sign of living creatures or even the slightest fluctuation of Qi.

However, Yang Kai grinned and shouted, “I’m sure you’ve been eagerly awaiting this moment, Brother Yin. Now that it’s come, why bother hiding like this?”

As soon as his words came out, somewhere in the sky, it was as though a piece of perfect brocade and silk had been torn off, and suddenly, a line of more than twenty people appeared.

A pair of eyes, carrying great murderous intent, focused on Yang Kai.

At the same time, a streak of light flashed by, turning into a cloak-like artifact that fell into the hand of a red-clothed woman.

Yang Kai's eyes lingered on the cloak for a moment before raising his brow and muttering, "A concealment artifact?"

He wasn't certain that this was the place, but his intuition had told him the people from the Netherworld Sect were hiding here, so he spoke up to check and sure enough, his intuition was right.

It seemed that they were able to conceal themselves not because of a Secret Art, but because of the cloak.

To be able to hide so many people at once and escape even his detection... It was quite an amazing artifact.

Yang Kai looked at the red-clothed girl with some slight surprise.

Although he knew that she and Old Fu had entered the Ancient Lands Passageway one day prior, he hadn't expected them to be together with the people of the Netherworld Sect. Furthermore, he didn't know whether they were Netherworld Sect's people or not.

At the moment, the red-clothed girl was glaring fiercely at him, seemingly very angry. She grit her teeth and demanded, "How did you find us?"

Old Fu could not help but sigh, "That shouldn't be the case, Young Lady. This artifact is a treasure gifted to you by Sir himself. How could a trivial First-Order Emperor Realm Master be able to see through it?"

"How could that be? I clearly heard him speak just now," the red-clothed girl said in dismay.

Old Fu was speechless, as were Yin Le Sheng and Hua Fei Chen.

[He was just probing, yet you revealed us immediately. Now you're asking how he found us? Why are you running around outside without a brain?]

Originally, they thought they could take advantage of the red-clothed girl's Emperor Artifact to catch Yang Kai off-guard; however, she had exposed them when Yang Kai was only three metres away from where they needed him to be!

At that moment, Yin Le Sheng and Hua Fei Chen's faces were as black as the bottom of a pot.

If they had known this would happen, they wouldn't have tried to borrow the power of the red-clothed girl's artifact to conceal themselves.

"Are you two also from the Netherworld Sect?" Yang Kai asked, looking at the red-clothed girl and Old Fu.

Before Old Fu could answer, the red-clothed girl coldly snorted, "What thing is the Netherworld Sect? How could this Young Lady be from such a lowly place?"

With these words, Old Fu's face cramped, and the expressions of Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng became even worse.

The red-clothed girl spoke thoughtlessly, but saying it so easily in front of the Netherworld Sect's people was no different from slapping them in the face; after all, the Netherworld Sect was one of the top Sects in the Eastern Territory, its name inspiring awe and fear in the masses, but it was described by the red-clothed girl so disdainfully.

It was no wonder Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng's expressions were so ugly.

If it were anyone else who said that, Hua Fei Chen would have slapped them in the face. However, he didn't dare to touch a single hair on this red-clothed girl's head.

Old Fu cut in hastily, "Please don't take it to heart, Elder Hua. My Young Lady is always like this, it couldn't be helped."

Although Hua Fei Chen was annoyed, he could only respond with a cold face, "Very well. Young Lady Lin'er is quite frank. This King will not quibble with her."

Upon hearing this, Yang Kai's eyes flashed, and he nodded, "I understand now."

The girl named Lin'er snapped, "You understand what?"

Yang Kai shook his head, "Nothing, just that this Young Lady seems to want to make things difficult for this Young Master by colluding with the Netherworld Sect."

"So what if I am?" The girl named Lin'er said, gritting her teeth. When she saw Yang Kai standing there motionless, she assumed that he was afraid and immediately puffed out her chest.

"If you want to live, you'd better get on your knees and kowtow to this Young Lady, then give me your Soul Imprint and serve this Young Lady for ten years! Who knows, I might let you live!"

"No!" When Yin Le Sheng heard that, his face changed greatly and he immediately tried to stop her.

He brought so many people with him together, all to kill Yang Kai, so how could he let this red-clothed girl say that she could let him live?

Yang Kai must die today, no matter what!

However, without giving him a chance to continue, the girl named Lin'er turned her head and said angrily, "Shut up! How dare you interrupt this Young Lady?!"

Yin Le Sheng was so infuriated that his face twisted up, but he didn't dare to say a word.

He could barely stand it. This little girl was clearly here to ask for their help, but at this moment, it was as though he and his Sect members had become her subordinates and needed to heed her every command.

The girl named Lin'er turned her attention to Yang Kai again, then she glanced around and frowned, "Where did that wench who was with you go?"

When she saw Yang Kai earlier, she was caught up in her anger and forgot about the existence of Zhang Ruo Xi. Now, she suddenly realized that Yang Kai was alone.

When he smiled without responding, she was angered, "Are you deaf? This Young Lady is asking you a question! Where did that wench who slapped my face go? I'm going to make her life worse than death!"

"Slapped..." Hua Fei Chen's ears perked up as he directed a look of shock at the young girl.

The other disciples of the Netherworld Sect also looked horrified.

Someone who dared to slap this Young Lady's face... existed? Who was this so-called 'wench' that truly didn't fear the Heavens?

Meanwhile, Old Fu was standing off to the side, his forehead dripping with cold sweat, his legs almost shaking.

His Young Lady was slapped in the face while he was escorting her. It would've been fine if no one learned about it, but she just had to expose it to the public. If this were to spread to Sir's ears, how could he possibly survive now?

The fearful Old Fu immediately looked over at Hua Fei Chen pleadingly, silently begging him to not let this out.

Hua Fei Chen returned his gaze and observed him, quickly figuring out what Old Fu was thinking and simply nodding.

Although Old Fu's cultivation was lower than his, he was nonetheless born and raised from 'that' place and served as this Young Lady's guard, so it wouldn't hurt to have a good relationship with him. There may come a time when they need to use Old Fu, so this could benefit them in the future.

After getting a response, Old Fu quickly cupped his fists to express his gratitude.

The girl named Lin'er continued shouting, her bosom heaving in anger. Finally, she put her hands on her hips and scolded angrily, "Call that wench out for me. This Young Lady won't spare her!"

She was confident that Yang Kai had hidden Zhang Ruo Xi somewhere.

Yang Kai coldly snorted and looked at her indifferently, "Little girl, this Young Master would advise you to learn your place. Otherwise, you will die somewhere sooner or later."

"How dare you!" Old Fu roared. How could he just stand by and watch as his Young Lady was being threatened like this?

The girl named Lin'er was utterly stunned and didn't react until several moments later, "You want to kill me?" she frowned.

"My patience is not limitless, girl. So what if I kill you?" Yang Kai sneered.

Upon hearing that, the girl flew into a hysterical rage.

“You want to kill me? You sure have guts! You people, hurry and come capture him for me!” She shrieked, urging Yin Le Sheng and the others around her to take action. It was as though the Netherworld Sect’s people were her subordinates.

Chapter 2549, Can’t Withstand It Anymore

Although the Netherworld Sect members were upset that they were being bossed around by the girl named Lin’er, since the matter had gotten this far, they couldn’t retreat either.

Not to mention, they were here to kill Yang Kai in the first place.

“Form up!” Yin Le Sheng suddenly shouted, waving his hand.

\*Shua Shua Shua...\*

Over twenty Netherworld Sect disciples flew up at once, floating in the air, surrounding Yang Kai all of a sudden. They appeared to be very particular about their positions, and whether it was the top or below, left or right, front or back, they didn’t leave a single route of escape.

Yin Le Sheng was nervously keeping an eye on Yang Kai, afraid that he would use his teleportation ability to escape.

If Yang Kai felt that things weren’t looking good for him and escaped, all their efforts would be for nought. They had not laid out the Spirit Array yet, and neither had they sealed the space around him. Basically, they were currently unable to kill or capture Yang Kai.

But what made him happy was that Yang Kai didn’t seem to attach any importance to them; he didn’t care the slightest bit about these twenty or so Netherworld Sect disciples and just stood still in his position.

[Enjoy being arrogant while you can! Do you think that you are invincible with your Space Tearing ability and your breakthrough to the Emperor Realm!? Today, I will let you know what it means that there are mountains beyond mountains and Heavens beyond Heavens.]

Yin Le Sheng was feeling extremely happy in his heart, but there wasn’t the slightest bit of change in his expression as his Divine Sense was locked right onto Yang Kai.

In the blink of an eye, the twenty or so Netherworld Sect disciples had already taken their respective positions.

\*Hualala...\*

After a series of clattering, those twenty or so Netherworld Sect disciples had summoned their respective artifacts. Their artifacts were exactly the same, as if they were made by the same person. All of them were carrying a huge pitch-black banner that was fluttering and flapping in the wind, exuding an extremely cold aura.

These banners were exactly the same as the Netherworld Purgatory Banner that Yang Kai got from Zhong Zhen Yong in the Shattered Star Sea. Obviously, they were the same kind of artifacts and seemed to be a favorite for Netherworld Sect disciples.

However, the energy fluctuations emitted by the Netherworld Purgatory Banners in these disciples' hands were weaker than Zhong Zhen Yong's. It should be because their refinement of these artifacts wasn't up to par.

Everyone had already taken their respective positions and summoned their banners as well; now, everything was ready except for the crucial thing.

The corner of Yin Le Sheng's lips rose as he revealed a hideous grin before shouting, "Start the Array!"

The twenty or so Netherworld Sect disciples shouted together before their hands started wildly dancing, forming hand seals. In an instant, a very subtle connection seemed to have formed between these twenty or so men, and an invisible barrier which was formed with them as its anchors, sealing Heaven and Earth appeared. A faint black Qi gushed out of the Netherworld Purgatory Banners next and diffused towards the centre.

"An Array!?" Yang Kai appeared startled as a flustered look appeared on his face, asking in shock, "What Array is this?"

Yin Le Sheng broke into laughter and arrogantly replied, "Of course, it's the Array that will take your life!"

At this point, he didn't need to worry about anything anymore. Since the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array was already activated, Yang Kai could not escape from this place even if he was proficient in the Dao of Space, unless he could break this Array, of course.

But could the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array arranged by more than twenty Dao Source Realm disciples using their Netherworld Purgatory Banners be destroyed by a mere First-Order Emperor Realm Master?

Even a Third-Order Emperor would be trapped for a while by this setup.

Yang Kai looked horrified and his face had gone totally pale as he looked at Yin Le Sheng. He nervously gulped as he stated, "Brother Yin, what enmity or grievance is there between you and me that you are so dead set upon going against me? I even spared you in the Shattered Star Sea, didn't I? Shouldn't we discard our old enmities?"

Yin Le Sheng was dancing in joy in his heart, but outwardly he just let out a cold snort and stated, "Spared me? Don't make it sound so pleasant. I just happened to have the information you needed. Otherwise, would you have spared me? Discard old enmities my foot! Yang Kai, spare me the rubbish. Today is the day you die."

Yang Kai bitterly asked, "Brother Yin, do you really have to kill me?"

Yin Le Sheng raised his head as he sneered, "What's wrong? Could it be that you still want to live at this point?"

Yang Kai pursed his lips into a smile, replying, "If one can live, who wants to die? Brother Yin, why don't you let me go today, I will pay you a visit in the future, for sure, to repay your kindness."

"Do you think that I am a three-year-old child? Aren't you even embarrassed to say this?"

Yang Kai helplessly said, "I guess Brother Yin has already decided to kill me, whatever I say will be useless..."

Yin Le Sheng yelled, "No matter how pleasantly you spew bullshit, no one is going to listen to you."

Yang Kai couldn't help but sigh before reaching out to his forehead and tucking his hair back as he requested with a forlorn look, "Brother Yin, I have another request!"

"Hmph, what else do you want to say?" A cold smile was hanging on Yin Le Sheng's lips, feeling extremely pleasant in his heart. He did not know why, but seeing Yang Kai at his wit's end and helpless, felt as if he had just ravaged several dozen beauties. He felt as if his entire body was filled with a pleasure he couldn't vent.

"Please let me die in the most beautiful way!" Yang Kai turned his cheek toward him and stood carrying his hands behind his back, looking at the sky with a sidelong glance, striking a cool pose.

Lin'er's lips involuntarily twitched as she whispered to Old Fu, "This man is really a showoff."

Old Fu had no idea how to respond.

Suddenly, a frown appeared on Yin Le Sheng's forehead as he shouted in anger, "You dare play a joke on me!?"

At this moment, he had finally realized that the reason Yang Kai was bullshitting so much was not because of fear, and neither was it because he wanted to leave a pretty speech on his deathbed, rather he was clearly amusing himself.

Yang Kai broke into laughter as he stated, "I was just playing around! Brother Yin, don't be so serious. Do you really think that this Young Master is afraid of you?"

The mischievous look on Yang Kai's face angered Yin Le Sheng so much that he almost spurted blood in anger.

Just as he said this, Space Principles surged as Yang Kai's figure suddenly blurred.

But very soon, his body phased out and became tangible again, reappearing on the same spot. He hadn't moved from his position even a step.

"The Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array is well-deserving of its reputation!" Yang Kai raised his brow. Although Qi He Feng had mentioned the might of this Array and he knew that it could isolate space, Yang Kai still wanted to see whether he could get out of it.

After giving it a try, Yang Kai found that the surrounding space was utterly sealed, and with his current achievements in the Dao of Space, he was unable to teleport out of here.

"What are you all waiting for!?" Yin Le Sheng shouted at the sight of this, lest Yang Kai escape if they delay any longer.

The twenty or so Netherworld Sect disciples pushed their Source Qi after receiving the order, pouring it into their Netherworld Purgatory Banners, fully activating the might of the Array.

\*Hu Hu Hu...\*

Suddenly, ghastly cries and wails appeared out of nowhere, making everyone feel as if they had fallen into the netherworld. A cold and sinister aura spread into the surrounding, freezing the ground and withering the grass and trees instantly before they were reduced into dust that blew away with the wind.

Dense and thick streams of black Qi kept gushing out from those twenty or so Netherworld Purgatory Banner while countless faint Yin Souls could be seen in the darkness, dancing around, bearing their claws and fangs, a terrifying sight to behold.

In just three breaths, the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array had sealed this region, turning it pitch-black. From the distance, it looked as if a giant pitch-black ball had suddenly appeared.

This black ball was a few hundred meters in diameter, covering a fairly wide area, and Yang Kai's figure had completely disappeared inside.

This Spirit Array was already terrifying with this kind of partial initialization, so it was easy to imagine how frightful it would be if fully completed.

Yin Le Sheng pursed his lips into a hideous grin, his eyes completely glued onto the huge black ball, as if he couldn't wait to witness Yang Kai's death with his own eyes.

If Yang Kai had a slim hope of escaping a moment ago, with the Array activated now, Yang Kai had no chance of surviving. Inside the Array, his vitality would keep on withering away. Furthermore, the might of twenty or so Netherworld Purgatory Banners would be greatly increased under the effect of the Array, making the joint attack of more than twenty Netherworld Sect disciples quite capable of taking Yang Kai's life.

"Yin Le Sheng, it seems you went to great lengths just to take my life, but do you really think that this Young Master can't break this Array?"

Suddenly, Yang Kai's fierce shout came from inside the black ball, one that sounded completely energetic, as if he wasn't affected by his situation at all.

Yin Le Sheng's pupils shrank as he suddenly felt a foreboding feeling grip his heart.

Before he could reply, a wave of terrifying energy fluctuations suddenly spread from the black ball, followed by a deafening explosion.

The huge black ball suddenly doubled in size under the explosion of energy, and looked as if it would burst at any moment.

The twenty or so Dao Source Realm disciples responsible for arranging the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array also turned pale and their figures trembled as if they had suffered some kind of backlash.

Yin Le Shen was completely taken aback and his eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.

Hua Fei Chen also spoke in amazement, “How is this possible? Hasn’t he just broken through to the Emperor Realm?”

Although he couldn’t see what move Yang Kai had just unleashed because of the isolation of the Array, judging by how the Array was affected, he could easily tell how powerful the attack was.

But how could a newly promoted Emperor display such prowess?

Hua Fei Chen imagined himself in Yang Kai’s shoes, wondering what it would be like if he was trapped inside the Array. In that case, he might not be left with any choice but to wait for his death. He would not be able to shake the Array at all.

What he saw just now felt so surreal!

\*Hong...\*

Another deafening explosion rang out as that black ball that had just recovered swelled again, this time ballooning even more than before.

\*Pu...\*

The twenty or so Dao Source Realm disciples coughed up mouthfuls of blood as their figures trembled.

Yang Kai’s previous attack had caused them to bear some shockwaves, and before they could steady themselves, they were struck again. They were injured this time, and while the damage wasn’t serious yet and it would not affect their operation of the Array, who knows how many such attacks Yang Kai could unleash?

If this went on, this Array might really be broken.

“Martial Uncle Hua, Senior Brother Yin, we can’t withstand it anymore!” Someone loudly shouted.

Yin Le Sheng was dumbstruck. He wanted to kill Yang Kai, and for this, he had brought so many people from the Sect, even inviting a Second-Order Emperor, Hua Fei Chen, to participate. What’s more, he had also laid out the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array. If he was still unable to kill Yang Kai after all this, what face would he have left to return to the Netherworld Sect? How would he face his Honoured Master who had placed such high hopes on him?

If he failed, it would be far worse than killing himself.

\*Hong...\*

The third explosion rang out.

\*Pu Pu Pu...\*

The twenty or so Netherworld Sect disciples spurted blood directly and went completely pale. More importantly, a tear had appeared on the huge black ball. Dense black Qi had suddenly started permeating into the surroundings.

Yin Le Sheng was flabbergasted.

[The Array... Will really collapse!]

At this moment, only five breaths had passed since Yang Kai had started making his move!

### **Chapter 2550, Taiyi Cinnamon Bowl**

“Young Lady Lin’er, please assist us!” Hua Fei Chen, seeing that the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array was on the verge of collapsing, unable to contain Yang Kai anymore, quickly shouted to the red-robed girl.

The girl named Lin’er rebuked, pouting, “What trash Spirit Array is this? More than twenty people can’t trap one guy, and you still aren’t embarrassed to call this waste powerful!? When this Young Lady asked you whether you needed help, you guys refused, and now you are begging me?”

Hua Fei Chen nearly spurted blood after hearing this. In his heart, he thought, [It’s not the Spirit Array’s fault, rather the enemy is too strong! Those who laid down the Array aren’t strong enough to maintain it!]

The stronger the people arranging the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array were, the more power the Netherworld Purgatory Banners could exert, and the stronger the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array would be. Otherwise, how could it become the Sect Defending Array of Netherworld Sect?

Yin Le Sheng and Hua Fei Chen had thought that this plan was foolproof. After all, Yang Kai had at best just broken through to the Emperor Realm, so how strong could he be? As long as they sealed the space around him, he would be at their mercy.

But the facts were completely different from their estimation. Yang Kai’s strength couldn’t be inferred by common sense at all.

“Young Lady Lin’er, there is no need for sly criticism.” Anxious, Hua Fei Chen’s forehead became drenched in cold sweat as he stated, “If Yang Kai escapes, I’m afraid Young Lady Lin’er’s goal would also fail.”

The girl named Lin’er suddenly came to her senses as she responded, “I guess you’re right! Then, I will help you this time.”

Saying so, a crystal clear jade bowl appeared in her hand. The jade bowl wasn’t that big, easily held in her slender white hand. Also, it was glowing and there was a picture of a cinnamon flower on it. It was unknown who had carved this flower, but it was vivid and lifelike, even shaking slightly as if it was blowing in the breeze.

The girl named Lin’er shouted, raising her hand as the jade bowl shot out of her hand, “Go!”

The jade bowl suddenly flew above the black ball, leaving a white trail of light. The next moment, it started growing bigger, turning into a semi-circular white screen in the blink of an eye. Next, it fell down upside down, completely covering that black ball.

Not only that, the illusory image of the cinnamon flower in the jade bowl became tangible, taking root in the ground, becoming a towering old tree. Immediately, a wonderful fragrance slowly began to permeate into the surroundings.

\*Hong...\*

Right then, Yang Kai struck again.

The black ball suddenly swelled again, but the jade-bowl-transformed white light screen blocked its expansion. This time, the black ball was suppressed, unable to swell noticeably.

The twenty or so Netherworld Sect disciples, whose faces were pale, thinking that the Array would definitely break this time and they would have to bear the backlash, were all pleasantly surprised after seeing the Array completely safe and sound under the protection of the light screen. Immediately after, they pushed their Source Qi even harder, increasing the might of the Array.

A covetous look appeared in Hua Fei Chen's eyes as he blurted, gulping, "Is that the Taiyi Cinnamon Bowl?"

This Emperor Artifact was famous. Only a few masters of Eastern Territory hadn't heard of it, but even fewer than a few people had ever laid their eyes on it. Hua Fei Chen was also seeing for the first time. With his experience and knowledge, he naturally knew the terrifying might of this Emperor Artifact.

"So what if it is? You want it?" The girl named Lin'er turned her head, staring at him coldly.

Hua Fei Chen was terrified and hurriedly replied, "I dare not! I dare not! It's just that Young Lady Lin'er has opened this Old Master's eyes today. This trip has become really worthwhile."

"Enough with all this nonsense, quickly get on with it, I can't keep this up for too long," the girl named Lin'er's face had gone red as her Source Qi kept pouring out like a flood. She could easily tell that the consumption of summoning the Emperor Artifact was pretty big and she wouldn't be able to maintain it for a long time.

Hua Fei Chen immediately regained his wits and solemnly responded, "I request Young Lady Lin'er to cooperate for a bit."

While speaking, he motioned to Yin Le Sheng as the two tacitly came to an understanding. Their figures flickered as they jumped straight towards the black ball.

The girl named Lin'er formed a few hand seals and opened a slight gap on the white light screen when the two approached it, letting them pass through.

The twenty-some Netherworld Sect disciples naturally did the same, allowing Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng to rush into the Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array.

Inside the Array, Yang Kai let out a soft exclamation with an extremely weird look on his face.

He was almost about to destroy this Array, but somehow some strong and sturdy force had stabilized it all of a sudden.

Not only that, but even the surrounding space had been more tightly sealed. Even he felt like he was being suppressed now.

Inside this ghastly Array, Yang Kai felt that he was surrounded by dark fog and he was unable to spread his Divine Sense very far. So naturally, he was oblivious to the fact that the girl named Lin'er was using a mighty Emperor Artifact to create difficulties for him.

He simply thought that he had underestimated the might of the Spirit Array.

\*Chi chi chi chi...\*

Swishing sounds kept coming from all around as the abominable Yin Souls swam around Yang Kai, attacking him whenever they found an opportunity.

The Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array was arranged with Netherworld Purgatory Banners as its foundation. The black fog that was capable of sealing space was also coming from the Netherworld Purgatory Banners, and thanks to the Array, the might of the Netherworld Purgatory Banners was enhanced.

Inside the Array, it was like fighting more than twenty Netherworld Sect disciples; it wasn't as simple as one plus one at all.

The Yin Souls seemed to have been greatly strengthened in this strange environment, and although Yang Kai tried his best to shake them off, he wasn't able to kill more than a few as he was focused on breaking the Array before, which led to his current predicament.

At this moment, he finally noticed the strangeness of this Spirit Array.

Entrapped in this place, Yang Kai discovered that his vitality was withering away bit by bit, and the black Qi around him was extremely corrosive; it was eroding his physique and Emperor Qi.

\*Wu Wu Wu...\*

Hair-raising ghost cries rang out to no end, and one after another, Yin Souls hidden in the black fog attacked him from every direction.

Yang Kai flicked his fingers, firing off Moon Blades in every direction.

Although this space was isolated, stopping him from teleporting out of the range of the Array, nothing was stopping him from using the Space Principles inside the black ball.

Yang Kai's Moon Blades were terrifying, and the Yin Souls were torn to ashes by them on contact.

Right then, Yang Kai suddenly had a bad premonition. Prompted by instinct, he swung his hand to palm the space behind him.

But this backhand struck nothing but the air. Instead, he was ruthlessly struck on the shoulder, which caused him to stagger back, sending his blood and Qi circulation into turmoil.

Fortunately, his body was strong, otherwise, this strike would have been enough to break his arm.

“Yang Kai, I am the Master in this Heavenly Net Absolute Sealing Array. If I want you to survive, you will survive, and if I want you to die, you will die. You will have no chance of living past today!” Yin Le Sheng’s voice suddenly came from every direction, drifting from place to place, making it impossible to tell where he was hiding.

Yang Kai tightly furrowed his brow, faintly feeling that things were a little troublesome.

Yin Le Sheng and Hua Fei Chen were both members of the Netherworld Sect and were like fish in the water within this array, whereas Yang Kai’s hands and feet were tied, making him unable to display his full strength.

And with the array devouring his vitality and countless Yin Souls attacking him, if Yang Kai didn’t find a way out soon, he wouldn’t be able to escape and would definitely die here.

Yang Kai’s thoughts turned rapidly, but before he could regain his footing, he felt a chill strike his neck.

Shocked, he promptly summoned the Myriads Sword and struck toward that oncoming chill.

A crisp clang rang as sparks flew about.

A cry of surprise immediately followed, which seemed to be Hua Fei Chen’s voice.

Obviously, he hadn’t expected Yang Kai to detect his sneak attack in such a desperate situation, rendering his strike useless.

The Myriads Sword in Yang Kai’s hand formed a curtain of Sword Qi as he looked around, and although he couldn’t see anything clearly, Yang Kai still pursed his lips into a smile and stated, “Yin Le Sheng, I thought that you would conduct yourself well after I let you go once in the Shattered Star Sea, I never thought that you would run to the Ancient Lands just to kill me. Since you wish so much to die, then it wouldn’t be right if this Young Master wouldn’t fulfill your wish.”

Yin Le Sheng blew his top and immediately lashed out, “You are still being so stubborn moments before death. I want to see what you will do now.”

Yang Kai laughed and stated, “Just wait and watch. But don’t cry later!”

Yin Le Sheng was completely furious and still wanted to retort, but Hua Fei Chen interrupted him, “Martial Nephew Yin, don’t listen to him, he is trying to find your location!”

Yin Le Sheng felt that Hua Fei Chen was right. Yang Kai was clearly at the end of his rope, so he was constantly provoking him to make him talk so that he could find his position.

[I should keep my mouth shut for now.]

Yang Kai, on the other hand, lightly sneered before speaking, “Do you think that this Young Master can’t do anything to you because of this weak Spirit Array? You will be kneeling and begging for mercy in just fifteen minutes.”

“Shameless boasting!” Yin Le Sheng was really furious and couldn’t help but shout back.

Hua Fei Chen was also shivering with anger. He had never seen such an ignorant Junior who didn’t know the immensity of Heaven and Earth. Clearly, death was knocking on his door but he was still boasting.

Where was he getting all this confidence from? Hua Fei Chen secretly decided that he would torture Yang Kai well after capturing him.

After a few more rounds of bickering, no more words could be heard inside the black ball, just constant swishing sounds.

The red-robed girl and Old Fu, who were standing outside, also understood that Yang Kai must be having a hard time even though they had no idea what was going on inside.

Because every once in a while, they could hear Yang Kai's groans. Obviously, he was attacked by Hua Fei Chen and Yin Le Sheng.

The girl named Lin'er tried her best to rouse the might of the Taiyi Cinnamon Bowl, and although this was taking a toll on her, her face was filled with excitement. Just like Hua Fei Chen, she was looking forward to torturing Yang Kai.

As long as she could take down Yang Kai, she would be able to vent all her frustrations; no matter what price she had to pay, it would be well worth it.

\*Peng Peng Peng...\*

Sounds of clashing swords could be heard coming from inside the black ball every now and then; however, it was quite obvious that Yang Kai was at a complete disadvantage. He was passively taking a beating, and if not for his proficiency in the Dao of Space, allowing him to notice subtle fluctuations around him and dodge incoming attacks, he would have died many times over by now.

Even so, he was in a tight corner at this moment. His body was riddled with multiple wounds, and although there weren't any serious injuries, the number of injuries was slowly increasing.

"You are still not dead!" Yin Le Sheng was shocked and furious. Just like him, Yang Kai had just broken through to the Emperor Realm, but he was showing far greater strength than Yin Le Sheng, which was very hard to accept.

But all that should be over soon as Yang Kai's vitality was constantly being drained by the Array and the surrounding Yin Qi invading his body as well as the accumulated injuries. Soon, Yang Kai would no longer have any strength left to resist, and when that happened, he would be a fish on the chopping block.